In order to protect traditional knowledge from being patented, provisions have been incorporated in the Patents (Second Amendment) Bill, 1999, to include anticipation by available local knowledge, including oral knowledge, as one of the grounds for opposition as also for revocation of patent. Provisions in this regard are contained in clauses 17 and 28 of the said Bill.

Apart from this Government has also initiated an exercise to develop a digital database of traditional knowledge in the field of medicinal plants to avoid patenting of such knowledge.

DDA's Residential Scheme

*338. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA' : Will the MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether DDA had informed the House in the last session about its intention to come out with a residential scheme in the begnning of the year 2000;

(b) if so, what is the position thereof;

(c) whether DDA is reconsidering its decision in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA) : (a) to (d) The announcement of new registration housing scheme for the general public, has been deferred for some time as it was decided that the DDA should first give top priority to cover all the waiting registrants within a reasonable time-frame and to provide basic infrastructure in all DDA unallotted/vacant flats to make them habitable at the earliest. However, a special scheme for rehabilitation of Punjab Migrants has been announced and this Scheme would remain open upto 30-4-2000.

As a mark of nation's gratitude to the Indian soldiers involved in 'Operation Vijay', the DDA in the year 1999 had announced 'Vijayee Veer Awas Yojana' for which the foundation stone was laid on 25-12-1999. Subsequently, it was decided that to utilise the flats offered under the Scheme in full, this Scheme should be extended to all battle casualities including 'Operation Vijay' w.e.f. 1-5-1999.

Two other Schemes namely, (i) Rehabilitation Scheme for Kashmiri Migrants and (ii) Housing Scheme for Government Servants who have five years left for retirement, are on the anvil.